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**East Elloe**  
**Rural District Council**



**ANNUAL REPORT**

of the

**Medical Officer of Health**

and the

**Chief Public Health Inspector**

for the

**Year 1959**



# East Elloe Rural District Council

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Chairman of the Council : Councillor A. White, J.P.

Clerk : J. C. Pywell.

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## PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE

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Chairman : Councillor H. L. Neaverson (to 21st October, 1959)

Councillor S. Garner (from 2nd November, 1959)

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### Members :

Councillor W. H. Baines	Councillor Mrs. A. H. S. Hunter
„ J. G. Baker	„ C. N. Mackman
„ R. G. Barwell	„ H. Palmer
„ F. Baxter	„ H. Piggins, J.P.
„ J. R. Boddy, J.P.	„ T. H. Rose
„ J. Cuthbert	„ C. Rowell
„ A. L. Dobbs	„ T. W. Selby
„ H. W. Farrow, J.P.	„ F. Stubley
„ T. Fines, (Wingland)	„ A. Tubbs
„ T. Fines, (Gedney)	„ H. Waltham
„ C. Hesketh	„ R. Weston
„ I. K. Howes	„ A. White, J.P.
„ A. G. Howlett	„ F. H. White (from 16th December, 1959)

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## STAFF OF THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT

### MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH—

H. P. Burrows, M.B., B.S.(Lond.), D.P.H. (to 1st November, 1959)

K. S. Deas, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H., (from 8th December, 1959)

Home Telephone Number—Spalding 3687.

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### CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR—

W. B. Hitchings, B.Sc. (Hons.), M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I., A.M.Inst.P.C.,  
A.Inst.S.P.

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### DISTRICT PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTORS—

G. Draycott, M.A.P.H.I., A.R.S.H.


B. F. Larkinson, M.A.P.H.I.

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### CLERKS—

Miss. F. J. Whelpton.

Miss V. Jackson.



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East Elloe Rural District Council,  
Mattimore House, Holbeach.

**Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the Year 1959**

*To the Chairman and Members of the East Elloe Rural District Council,*

Mr. Chairman, Madam and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present to you my report on the health of your district for the year 1959.

During the most part of the period covered by this report my predecessor Dr. H. P. Burrowes was your Medical Officer of Health so that my remarks and comments on the report will be brief.

The year was not marked by any spectacular moves in the field of public health but rather by a fairly steady advance on most fronts. There is no doubt that the most pressing needs of the District are the abolition of bad housing and the provision of modern drainage methods for the "urban" areas. The Slum Clearance Programme has continued at a steady rate but until the problem is solved this rate must not be allowed to slow down. It is also to be hoped that the sewage disposal schemes long planned for Holbeach, Long Sutton and Sutton Bridge will reach the construction stage in the near future. Judged by infectious disease notifications and death returns the general health of the community continued to be good. Rates of sickness however, difficult or impossible to measure, might show that the common insanitary drainage methods of the district were affecting health. Mild attacks of sickness and diarrhoea appear to be too common and too often cause absence from school and work.

It was pleasing to see that once again there were no cases of poliomyelitis or diphtheria. The poliomyelitis immunisation scheme has continued with vigour and has undoubtedly played the major part in the suppression of this disease. The infant mortality rate at 24.24 is satisfactory and is approximately the same as the country as a whole.

In conclusion may I express my thanks to the members and officers of the Council for the way I was received on taking up my appointment and to the Chief Public Health Inspector and his staff for their co-operation and their help in the compilation of this report.

I am, Madam, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

KENNETH S. DEAS,

Medical Officer of Health.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA

- The district covers an area of 84,597 acres.
- The estimated resident population, mid-1959 : 22,690 persons.
- The rateable value as at 1st April, 1959 : £156,767.
- The sum represented by a one-penny rate : £607.
- The number of inhabited houses according to the rate book on 31.3.60 : 7149.
- Estimated average number of persons per inhabited house : 3.2.
- Average number of persons per acre : 0.3.
- Average number of persons per square mile : 172.
- Number of inhabited houses per acre : ~~11.8~~ .08

The rural district of East Elloe is within the Holland division of Lincolnshire and is situated in fenland in the extreme south of the County, bounded for 12 miles by the shores of the Wash. The present district is an amalgamation of the three urban districts of Holbeach, Long Sutton and Sutton Bridge together with a surrounding rural district. The district's economy is almost entirely agricultural and the land is intensively farmed, mostly for crops. Associated industries in the district are flour millers, a fruit and vegetable cannery a basket factory and light agricultural engineering. There is also a sawmill and joinery works.

Owing to increased mechanisation on the farm, there is a growing number of inhabitants working in the surrounding towns. In this area it is the practice for many of the married women to be employed on agricultural work, either full or part-time, and as a consequence there is a comparatively high standard of living for a rural area.

Births	Males	Females	Total
Livebirths			
Legitimate	154	167	321
Illegitimate	6	3	9
	160	170	330
Stillbirths			
Legitimate	3	5	8
Illegitimate	1	—	1
	4	5	9

Deaths	Males	Females	Total
All Ages	154	86	240
Infants under 1 year of age			
Legitimate	4	4	8
Illegitimate	—	—	—
	—	—	—
	4	4	8
	—	—	—
Infants under 4 weeks of age			
Legitimate	2	3	5
Illegitimate	—	—	—
	—	—	—
	2	3	5
	—	—	—
Infants under 1 week of age			
Legitimate	1	1	2
Illegitimate	—	—	—
	—	—	—
	1	1	2
	—	—	—

### Statistics relating to mothers and infants

Live Births	
Number	330
Rate per 1000 population	14.54
Illegitimate Live Births per cent of total live births	2.73
Stillbirths	
Number	9
Rate per 1000 total live and still births	26.55
Total Live and Still Births	339
Infant Deaths (deaths under 1 year)	8
Infant Mortality Rates	
Total infant deaths per 1000 total live births	24.24
Legitimate infant deaths per 1000 legitimate live births	24.92
Illegitimate infant deaths per 1000 illegitimate live births	0
Neo-natal Mortality Rate (deaths under 4 weeks per 1000 total live births)	15.15
Early Neo-natal Mortality Rate (deaths under 1 week per 1000 total live births)	6.08
Perinatal Mortality Rate (stillbirths and deaths under 1 week combined per 1000 total live and still births)	32.45
Maternal Mortality (including abortion)	
Number of deaths	Nil
Rate per 1000 total live and still births	0

**CAUSES AND NUMBERS OF DEATHS IN  
EAST ELLOE RURAL DISTRICT DURING 1959.**

					Male	Female	Total
1.	Tuberculosis, Respiratory	....	....	....	1	—	1
2.	Tuberculosis, other	....	....	....	—	1	1
3.	Syphilitic disease	....	....	....	—	—	—
4.	Diphtheria	....	....	....	—	—	—
5.	Whooping Cough	....	....	....	—	—	—
6.	Meningococcal Infections	....	....	....	—	—	—
7.	Acute Poliomyelitis	....	....	....	—	—	—
8.	Measles	....	....	....	—	—	—
9.	Other infective and parasitic diseases	....	....	....	—	—	—
10.	Malignant Neoplasm, stomach	....	....	....	5	5	10
11.	Malignant Neoplasm, lung, bronchus	....	....	....	5	—	5
12.	Malignant Neoplasm, breast	....	....	....	—	2	2
13.	Malignant Neoplasm, uterus	....	....	....	—	2	2
14.	Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms	....	....	....	11	9	20
15.	Leukaemia and Aleukaemia	....	....	....	3	1	4
16.	Diabetes	....	....	....	—	—	—
17.	Vascular lesions of nervous system	....	....	....	22	8	30
18.	Coronary disease, angina	....	....	....	22	12	34
19.	Hypertension with heart disease	....	....	....	3	1	4
20.	Other heart disease	....	....	....	24	9	33
21.	Other circulatory disease	....	....	....	8	7	15
22.	Influenza	....	....	....	2	—	2
23.	Pneumonia	....	....	....	5	7	12
24.	Bronchitis	....	....	....	13	3	16
25.	Other diseases of respiratory system	....	....	....	—	—	—
26.	Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	....	....	....	2	—	2
27.	Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	....	....	....	1	—	1
28.	Nephritis and nephrosis	....	....	....	1	2	3
29.	Hyperplasia of prostate	....	....	....	2	—	2
30.	Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	....	....	....	—	—	—
31.	Congenital malformations	....	....	....	1	1	2
32.	Other defined and ill-defined diseases	....	....	....	12	13	25
33.	Motor vehicle accidents	....	....	....	7	—	7
34.	All other accidents	....	....	....	3	3	6
35.	Suicide	....	....	....	1	—	1
36.	Homicide and operations of war	....	....	....	—	—	—
Total number of deaths :					154	86	240

# Birth Rates, Death Rates and Infant Mortality Rates in East Elloe Rural District 1945—1959.

Year	No. of Births	Crude Birth Rate	No. of Deaths	Crude Death Rate	Infant Mortality Rate	Average 5 years		
						Birth Rate	Death Rate	Infant Mortality Rate
1945	398	18.64	231	10.82	37.69	} 19.44	10.54	35.92
1946	421	19.05	226	10.23	28.50			
1947	519	23.15	246	10.97	50.10			
1948	443	19.32	210	9.16	24.83			
1949	390	17.05	264	11.54	38.46			
1950	398	17.17	220	9.49	35.18	} 16.42	10.38	34.58
1951	373	16.24	251	10.93	32.17			
1952	376	16.57	247	10.89	34.57			
1953	371	16.33	223	9.82	40.43			
1954	360	15.80	246	10.79	30.55			
1955	318	13.66	237	10.18	3.14	} 14.18	10.51	20.24
1956	330	14.25	251	10.84	30.30			
1957	313	13.54	226	9.78	28.75			
1958	338	14.92	253	11.17	14.79			
1959	330	14.54	240	10.58	24.24			

## COMMENTS ON VITAL STATISTICS

The birth and death rates have been corrected by using the comparability factor supplied by the Registrar General and these figures may therefore be compared with those of England and Wales :—

	East Elloe Rural District	England and Wales
Live Birth Rate	14.98	16.5
Death Rate	10.58	11.6
Infant Mortality Rate	24.24	22.0
Still-birth Rate	26.55	20.7

The above figures show that the district compares favourably with those of the country as a whole.

The main causes of death are due to diseases associated with old age but once again the loss of life from accidents of all kind (13) is to be deplored when it is considered that the majority, if not all, of them could have been prevented. I would therefore urge the Council to continue, in all aspects of its work, to do everything in its power to prevent accidents both on the road and in the home. It is not sufficiently realised by the public, particularly the aged and those caring in any way for the aged, that almost as many people die as a result of accidents in their own home as do from road accidents.

A point which should be remembered when the statistics of a small district like this are being considered is the large effect on rates which a few deaths will have. For example the infant mortality rate is 24.24 but if there had been the chance death of just one more infant the rate would jump to 27.27. This factor largely explains the great irregularity of the Infant Mortality Rate over the past 5 years. The 5-yearly averages however shown on the table above would indicate that the Rate is definitely falling.

**PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER,  
INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES**

**Cases Notified, excluding Tuberculosis**

Disease	Cases Notified
Scarlet Fever ....	18
Whooping Cough ....	2
Acute Poliomyelitis ....	—
Measles ....	23
Diphtheria ....	—
Pneumonia ....	14
Dysentery ....	1
Enteric Fever ....	—
Paratyphoid ....	—
Erysipelas ....	5
Meningococcal Infection ....	—
Food Poisoning ....	—
Puerperal Pyrexia ....	—
Ophthalmia Neonatorum ....	—
Total :	63

**Analysis of Cases of Infectious Disease under Age Groups.**

Disease	Age Group in years								Total
	under 1	1-2	3-4	5-9	10-14	15-24	25 & over	Not known	
Scarlet Fever	—	1	2	10	5	—	—	—	18
Whooping Cough	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
Measles	2	6	8	5	1	1	—	—	23
Pneumonia	—	—	—	3	—	1	9	1	14
Dysentery	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1
Paratyphoid Fever	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Erysipelas	—	—	—	—	—	—	5	—	5
Meningococcal Infection	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Food Poisoning	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total cases :	3	8	10	18	6	2	15	1	63

Comments on Infectious Disease

An epidemic of sickness with vomiting occurred at Long Sutton Infants School—52 children, 2 teachers and 20 parents were affected. It was established that the outbreak was not due to food poisoning and therefore school meals and school milk could not be blamed. It was thought that the outbreak was probably due to a virus infection similar to the occurrence at Gedney Church-end school last year.

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION

Between the 1st January, 1959 and the 31st December, 1959 229 children under five years of age, and 13 children between the ages of 5 and 14 years, received a primary immunisation course (3 injections at monthly intervals).

A further 311 children were given a “ booster ” or secondary injection.

The following table compiled from figures supplied by the County Medical Officer shows the numbers and percentage of children at 31st December 1959 who have been immunised at any time.

District	Under 1 year		1 and under 5 years		5-14 years	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Boston Borough .....	99	23.8	1225	74.0	3633	92.4
Spalding Urban .....	52	22.3	677	73.6	2072	94.6
Boston Rural .....	73	20.1	1014	72.8	3185	91.3
East Elloe Rural .....	63	24.0	898	76.8	3358	91.7
Spalding Rural .....	55	16.8	811	69.5	3129	96.6
Totals	342	21.3	4625	73.4	15377	93.1

When considering the figure 24.0% for children born in 1959 (i.e. under 1 year) who had been immunised in the year it must be noted that only about one third of them could have completed the course of injections by December 31st.

TUBERCULOSIS

				M.	F.	Total
Cases of Tuberculosis on the Register at 31/12/59.	{	Pulmonary ...	...	40	43	83
		Non-pulmonary	...	7	1	8
Cases removed from the Register as cured during 1959.	{	Pulmonary ...	...	—	—	—
		Non-pulmonary	...	—	—	—
Cases removed from the Register due to diagnosis not being confirmed during 1959.	{	Pulmonary ...	...	—	—	—
		Non-pulmonary	...	—	—	—
Cases added to the Register during 1959.	{	Pulmonary ...	...	2	4	6
		Non-pulmonary	...	1	—	1

The total number of cases on the Register at 31.12.59 was 91. Seven names were added to the Register during 1959 and three cases were removed ; these being removed through death.

### Analysis of new cases and deaths during 1959.

AGE GROUP	NEW CASES				DEATHS			
	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Under 5 years	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	—
5-15 years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15-25 years	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
25-35 years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
35-45 years	—	—	—	—	3	—	—	—
45-55 years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
55-65 years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Over 65 years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals	1	1	1	—	3	—	—	—

### Details of Cases on Tuberculosis Register, 1951-1959.

	Cases on Register at 31st December.			Deaths during year.	
	New Cases	Pulmonary	Non-pulmonary	Pulmonary	Non-pulmonary
1951	12	57	22	8	2
1952	10	61	20	4	—
1953	8	62	15	—	—
1954	12	69	7	4	—
1955	9	74	9	—	—
1956	10	72	9	—	—
1957	12	77	8	2	—
1958	6	80	7	—	—
1959	3	83	8	3	—

It will be seen from the above table that the number on the T.B. register continues to rise although the numbers of new cases found is falling. It is gratifying to see this latter figure falling and no alarm need be felt about the number on the register. The “epidemic” of tuberculosis in the post war years and the great drive for mass X-ray in the last 10 years produced many new cases and once a person is added to the register it is very difficult to declare him fully cured and therefore fit to have his name removed. Many of the cases on the register are fit persons living normal lives.

## GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA

### (a) Hospitals

Holbeach Hospital is attended by the various specialists at given intervals. It is a general practitioner's hospital and a duty rota is maintained by all the practitioners in the District. It has a maternity unit.

Other hospitals which serve the area are :—

Boston General Hospital	....	....	Acute General cases
Kings Lynn and West Norfolk Hospital		„ „ „	
North Cambridge Hospital, Wisbech		„ „ „	
White House Hospital, Fishtoft	....		Infectious and Chest Diseases
Pinchbeck Road Hospital, Spalding	....		Aged and chronic sick

### (b) Ambulance Service

A standing Joint Committee representative of the Local Medical Committee, the Hospital Management Committee and the County Council, aims at ensuring the efficiency of this Service.

### (c) Midwifery and Maternity Services

The County Council is the supervising authority under the Midwives Acts.

### (d) Health Visiting

Health Visitors attend infant welfare and ante-natal clinics, visit expectant and nursing mothers and mental defectives.

### (e) Clinics and Treatment Centres

Infant Welfare Centres and Ante-natal clinics are provided by the County Council at Holbeach, Long Sutton and Sutton Bridge.

Ophthalmological examinations are provided by appointment at Holbeach Clinic.

Speech Therapy is provided by appointment at Holbeach Clinic.

Vaccination against smallpox and immunisation against diphtheria and Whooping Cough are provided at all Infant Welfare Clinics.

### (f) Laboratory Facilities

These are provided by the Public Health Laboratory of the Medical Research Council at Lincoln and specimens for bacteriological examination, and samples of food and water have been despatched there.

Samples of milk and ice-cream have also been submitted to the Public Health Laboratory at Peterborough and District hospital.

**(g) Home Nursing**

A home nursing service is maintained by the County Council.

**(h) Home Helps**

This service is provided by the County Council and is available to the public during illness or in the later months of pregnancy.

**(i) National Assistance Act, 1948, Section 47**

One Order was made under this section where an aged man was living in insanitary conditions and was in need of care and attention, but he afterwards agreed to go to the Pinchbeck Road Hospital, Spalding, where he settled down comfortably. Three other investigations were made into other reported cases within the scope of this section, but in these cases arrangements were made to keep the persons concerned under observation.

**SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA, HOUSING,  
INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.**

These matters are dealt with in detail in the report of the Chief Public Health Inspector which follows.

**HOUSING**

Reference to the housing needs of the District has been made in the foreword to this report. Full details of the existing state of Slum Clearance and rebuilding will be found in the Chief Public Health Inspector's report following.

**WATER SUPPLY**

It is estimated that 98% of the properties in the district have a mains water supply available to them, and having regard to the scattered nature of the district and its size—over 130 square miles—this is no mean achievement, particularly if one bears in mind the advent of mains water to the district was as late as 1933. This very satisfactory coverage bears great credit on the policy of the Council in extending water mains and on the efficiency of the Water Department staff. In particular the co-operation of Mr. Rippin, the Council's Water Engineer must be acknowledged, in keeping the Health Department informed of all matters of mutual interest and in his awaiting of satisfactory sample results before putting new or repaired mains into service. A pure and adequate supply has been made available in spite of many technical difficulties, and a very high standard of service has been instituted. In particular it is hoped that in the formation of the proposed new Water Board the close liaison which has existed with this department will not be lost.

## **Report supplied by Mr. H. Rippin, Council's Water Engineer and Manager.**

The total quantity of water distributed in the East Elloe area for the year under review was 262,310,000 gallons which is the highest on record.

This figure gives a daily average of 718,657 gallons. In addition 18,461,000 gallons was distributed in the Weston and Moulton areas of the Spalding R.D.C.

In consequence of the unusually fine summer of 1959 most undertakings throughout the country were under considerable strain.

The East Elloe Council's Water Undertaking, in coping with record demands for water, was subjected to some difficulty but due to earlier foresight was able to meet the situation without the imposition of any restrictions.

The second section of the trunk main duplication scheme was laid during the year and brought into service during the months of June and July. This was the section between the parishes of Whaplode and Holbeach. Preliminary steps are being taken to continue this duplication through to Little Sutton Tower thus putting the undertaking on a safe basis and enabling all demands in the foreseeable future to be met.

The question of the bulk supply problem was resolved during the year and a guarantee was effected between the Spalding R.D.C. and the East Elloe R.D.C. for a further supply of 900,000 gallons of water per day to be delivered to the Weston Pumping Station. The new main to carry this water from Pinchbeck to Weston was brought into service during the year.

A further scheme to improve supplies to the eastern end of the district was completed during the year. This was the installation of a small electric booster pump to deliver water into the high level tower at Little Sutton when the main pressure was inadequate. This pump operates on a high and low level basis and controlled automatically.

The preparation of a further distribution scheme was commenced during the year. This scheme involves the laying of approx. 20 miles of 3 in. and 4 in. diameter asbestos cement mains covering 22 separate sections in various parts of the rural district.

This scheme had previously been submitted to the Ministry of Housing and Local Government and received approval in principle. It was hoped that the scheme would be commenced during 1960.

Some small extensions were completed during the year for Council and private housing sites.

The subject of grouping occupied the mind of the Council during the year in company with the other Councils included in the proposed amalgamation of water undertakings in South Lincolnshire.

Frequent bacteriological and chemical analyses of mains water were taken during the year with satisfactory results, as given in the following tables.

## Chemical Examination

A sample of mains water was sent for full chemical examination on 9th February 1960 and the analyst's report on it was as follows :—

Appearance when received :	NIL	Nature of deposit :	NIL
Colour :	NIL	Odour :	NIL
Reaction :	Faintly alkaline, PH7.5	Taste :	Satisfactory.

Results of chemical analysis in parts per million :—

Ammoniacal nitrogen :	0.08	Hardness as CaCO <sub>3</sub> :—	
Albuminoid nitrogen :	0.04	Total :	310
Nitrate nitrogen :	1.0	Carbonate (temporary)	240
Nitrite nitrogen :	NIL	Non-carbonate (permanent)	70
Chlorine as chlorides :	18	Alkalinity as CaCO <sub>3</sub>	240

Oxygen absorbed (4 hr., 27°C.)	0.30	Free carbon dioxide	15
Silica as SiO <sub>2</sub>	4.5	Total solids (at 180°C.)	435
Sulphate as SO <sub>4</sub>	90	Iron (total)	0.11
Fluorine as F	0.70	Metals in solution other than iron	NIL

Analyst's opinion :—

The organic quality of this water is good and the analysis as a whole shows no sign of pollution. This water was previously analysed in December 1957 and the present analysis is similar to that of the previous sample except that the fluorine content on this occasion is markedly higher. We understand that the main supply in Holbeach is a mixture of two waters, and it may be that the present sample contains these waters in different proportions from the previous sample.

The reaction of the water is on the alkaline side of neutrality and the water would not be expected to have any serious corrosive action on metals. A trace of iron is present, but the amount is of no importance. The total hardness approximates to 28° Clark. In our opinion this water is very suitable for drinking and general purposes.

# Bacteriological Examinations

Regular weekly samples of water were taken during the year by the public health inspectors and sent for examination to the Public Health Laboratory at Lincoln. Results were as shown in the table below.

Mains Water Samples	Class I Excellent	Class II Satisfactory	Class III Suspicious	Class IV Unsatisfactory	Remarks
Routine samples, taken from various points in each parish	79	1	1	—	Class III sample occurred after connection to new trunk main — chlorination carried out and repeat samples reported Class I. Two Class I samples obtained before bringing each new section into use. Length of new main relaid to obtain Class I samples.
Check samples on new 12" Trunk main before bringing into service.	8	4	1	5	
Extension to main at Langwith Drive, Holbeach Taken after bursting of main on riverbank, Sutton Bridge.	4	—	1	5	
Private factory mains and storage tanks.	4	—	—	—	Immediate chlorination, etc., carried out by factory on report of unsatisfactory samples.
	12	5	4	1	
Taken from Wisbech R.D.C. supply.	1	—	—	—	Chlorination and further sampling carried out by Spalding R.D.C.
Taken from new Trunk main laid by Spalding R.D.C. for augmenting supply to this district.	—	—	1	—	
Taken from water cart providing supply to isolated house.	1	—	—	—	
Taken from children's paddling pool.	—	1	—	—	Chlorination arrangements made.
	109	11	8	11	

Private Water Samples	Satisfactory Unsatisfactory		
From shallow wells.	1	2	One unsatisfactory well supply discontinued ; scheme in hand for providing mains to other unsatisfactory supply. Schemes in hand for providing mains to 3 of 5 properties with unsatisfactory supplies.
Direct from Underground cisterns.	1	5	
From underground cisterns after pressing through charcoal filter.	1	—	
Rainwater butt.	1	—	
	4	7	

From results of samples over the years, it would seem that a more pure supply of water bacteriologically can be obtained in this area by means of above-ground rainwater butts than by use of underground storage, as it is very difficult to make the latter construction permanently watertight. Also the use of charcoal filters for uncertain private water supplies does seem to offer a safeguard, provided they are properly maintained.

Agreements have been reached during the year to allow extended private service mains to be laid to provide several isolated houses and farms with mains water supplies.

### **Swimming and Bathing**

Although the area borders on the shores of the Wash, there are no suitable places for bathing and the main land-drains which are used for occasional bathing always produce, when the water is sampled, unsatisfactory bacteriological reports. No public swimming facilities at all are available in the district. It is to be hoped that if and when the new schools in the district are given swimming pools, these would be available to the public. It seems illogical to teach and encourage swimming at school and then deny the children the facilities of the pool when they leave school.

## REPORT OF THE CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR ON THE SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT

Mr. Chairman, Madam, and Gentlemen,

1959 was a sad year for me for, towards its close, the Council, and this Department in particular, suffered a grievous loss in the death of Councillor H. L. Neaverson, Chairman of the Public Health Committee for over nine years. Much was owed to him for his enlightened views and wise advice.

The table of numbers of nuisance complaints following gives some idea of the varied duties and responsibilities of the Department and I am most grateful for the keen and enthusiastic way in which the District Public Health Inspectors have tackled them.

It is not, however, problems such as these that form the bulk of the Department's work. It is the regular daily routine of food inspection, house inspection, general sanitary supervision and the inevitable record and form filling that takes up the time of the Inspectors.

The Department's work would be impossible without an efficient office staff and I would thank the Clerks for their efficient and careful work during the past year.

The workmen employed in refuse collection and allied duties are in daily contact with the public. The almost complete absence of complaints shows how well they do their work and I thank them for their loyalty and co-operation.

Looking back over what I have written it would seem I have done little but praise those who work for the Department. This is however as it should be for, looking back over nearly 25 years service with the Council, I realise how impossible would have been my task were it not for loyalty and co-operation.

The need for sewerage schemes, particularly in the urbanised areas, becomes more imperative each year. Without them many nuisances are unavoidable and progress in modernising older property is made, inevitably, much more difficult.

Generally, schemes are proceeding satisfactorily. Extensions have been made in the refuse collection routes and one of the main objectives, weekly collection everywhere, may well become a reality in the near future.

Slum clearance work is progressing steadily, and the new Standard Grants for improvements have been material in improving amenities at many dwellings.

It is reassuring to again report 100% meat inspection, but one of the Cinderellas of health work, the inspection of food premises, has not received as much attention as is thought desirable.

Pest destruction has now become quite a scientific operation but the new materials and techniques, effective as they are, do not completely rid us of them. Constant vigilance is still required to control their numbers.

Petroleum storage installations have come in for rather more than their fair share of attention owing to the newly adopted construction regulations and the electrical requirements which come into force in 1960.

New legislation, affecting the Department's work, which came into force during the year included :—

House Purchase and Housing Act 1959.

Housing (Underground Rooms) Act 1959.

Milk and Dairies (General) Regulations 1959.

Ice Cream (Heat Treatment etc.) Regulations 1959.

Factories Act 1959.

Public Health Officers Regulations 1959.

In conclusion I would thank, most sincerely, the Members of the Public Health Committee for their advice and support, Dr. Burrowes for his encouragement and all the Officers of the Council for their ever willing co-operation and help at all times.

I am,

Your obedient servant,

W. B. HITCHINGS,

Chief Public Health Inspector.

## NUISANCES

### Complaints

In the year under review a total of 128 complaints were registered in respect of various matters as shown in the following list. All complaints were immediately investigated and appropriate action taken as necessary. The majority of complaints will be seen to be in regard to unsatisfactory housing conditions, drainage troubles and unwelcome infestations. On receipt of complaints of nuisance due to the discharging the contents of cesspool-emptiers onto arable land the vehicles have been immediately diverted elsewhere but the problem of finding suitable isolated sites is becoming increasingly difficult, particularly in winter months. Complaints of delay in emptying cesspools after requests for this service have not been included as at times of heavy demand a waiting list of a few days is unavoidable.

General housing defects	....	....	....	36
Dangerous structures	....	....	....	1
Unclean persons and houses	....	....	....	4
Overcrowding	....	....	....	2
Unsatisfactory moveable dwellings	....	....	....	3
Defective or inadequate closet accommodation				7
Defective, blocked or inadequate drainage	....			13
Defective or overflowing cesspools	....	....		5
Insect pests	....	....	....	7
Rat and mice infestations	....	....	....	12
Offensive accumulations	....	....	....	4
Offensive smells	....	....	....	7
Nuisance from pig-keeping	....	....	....	1
Nuisances from slaughterhouses	....	....	....	2
Indiscriminate tipping	....	....	....	1
Nuisances from refuse tips	....	....	....	2
Nuisances from refuse collection	....	....	....	4
Nuisances from sewage disposal plants	....			2
Nuisance from emptying of cesspools	....			1
Nuisance from emptying of pail closets	....			1
Nuisances from road gullies	....	....	....	2
Poor street cleansing	....	....	....	1
Litter	....	....	....	1
Watercourse pollution	....	....	....	2
Flooding due to surface water	....	....	....	2
Poor land drainage	....	....	....	2
Unsafe well water supplies	....	....	....	2
Lack of privacy	....	....	....	1

## **Atmospheric Pollution**

The whole of the rural district enjoys a clean atmosphere but periodic visits are made to boiler plants to ensure that the provisions of the Clean Air Act 1956 are being complied with. There are no registered Alkali Works in the district.

## **Offensive Trades**

There are no offensive trades, as defined by the Public Health Act, operating in the district.

## **Litter**

Following the coming into force of the Litter Act 1958, additional wire litter bins, bearing no advertisements, have been placed at suitable points throughout the area and it is intended in the future to add to the 32 bins, plus those provided in parks by the Parish Councils, which are in position at the end of 1959. It does appear that, generally, the litter bins are well used.

## **River Pollution**

The pollution of the dykes around the townships of Holbeach, Long Sutton and Sutton Bridge continues and this unsatisfactory position cannot be improved until the proposed sewerage schemes are carried out. Cleaning of these dykes, carried out by the River Boards, is a most objectionable task.

# **SANITATION OF BUILDINGS**

## **Main Sewerage**

In regard to the long awaited and urgently needed main sewerage schemes for Holbeach, Long Sutton and Sutton Bridge townships in the year under review, the plans for the schemes were re-cast by the Council's Consulting Engineers to allow for changed conditions and new development since the plans were first drawn up in 1948. It is hoped that compulsory purchase of land procedure and any public enquiries will not be unduly protracted and so further delay these very necessary projects. The deterioration of the old sewers, street drains and combined drains is becoming serious, particularly at inspection chambers and catchpits and the district has been fortunate that on only two occasions, when blockages occurred in the year, was it necessary to excavate and rebuild.

## **Sewage Disposal Plants**

There are now 27 small sewage plants maintained by the Health Department. Of these 21 serve Council housing estates, 4 serve County schools, one serves a hostel and one an invalid's home. Two further plants at new housing sites are in course of erection.

The poplar trees planted in most of the sewage plant enclosures are now of sufficient size to screen the works from view and help to reduce complaints of smell nuisance. Nevertheless, chlorination of the sewage at one plant was resorted to for a short period during hot summer weather. Satisfactory repairs were carried out by experts to prevent decay of brickwork of settlement tanks and filters at plants and an extra skin of brickwork built to support the filter bed at another plant.

In an effort to improve effluents, a top layer of small graded media was added on three plants and improvements made to the distribution arrangements on the filter arms.

### **Public Conveniences**

Suitable public conveniences for men and women are provided at Holbeach, Long Sutton and Sutton Bridge, and are administered by the respective Parish Councils.

Temporary sanitary conveniences are provided, erected and maintained by this department in Spring for the influx of visitors touring the tulip fields. The conveniences are also loaned to organisations holding sports, fetes and other outdoor events.

### **Provision of Water Closets**

No special grant is paid by the Council to encourage owners of conservancy type closets to convert to the water carriage system but standard improvement grants are now available and the Public Health Inspectors give all possible assistance to owners. Each year the number of houses which lack a water closet is reduced but there remains quite a number of properties in the townships where, owing to restricted sites, conversion cannot be effected until a proper sewer is made available. Ironically, these are properties where the most objection can be raised to the use of obsolete and insanitary forms of closet—e.g. food shops, congested and terraced properties. Many vault closet structures are becoming dilapidated but conversion to pails is not encouraged owing to high cost and nuisance caused by the emptying service. All possible persuasion is made to convert such to water closets where this is practicable and it is a great asset that the Council approve a simple and inexpensive type of septic tank and soakaway construction.

It is hoped that it will not be too far in the future when even a rural district will have every closet in the form of a W.C. A very welcome step has been the conversion of closets at 42 Council houses during the year and the formulation of a future programme for the continuation of this work. A brief check shows that in the urban part of Holbeach, about 200 old type closets have been converted to W.C.'s in the past five years. It is particularly pleasing to know that for some years, all the County schools in the rural district have been equipped with water closets.

## **Supervision of Drainage Work**

I have the opportunity to peruse all plans submitted for byelaw approval. All new drainage work in the district, except for Crown or County Council properties, is examined and tested by the public health inspectors.

During 1959 new drainage work was inspected at 104 Council houses and 134 private properties. In addition advice has been given to owners on request regarding methods of improving existing private drainage disposal arrangements.

## **PUBLIC CLEANSING**

### **Staff**

A total of 20 workmen are employed on the cleansing services. All are permanent men though not superannuated and there has been no alteration in the establishment during the year ; one workman left voluntarily and was replaced without difficulty. Economy and efficiency has been achieved in the cleansing work in the district and this is greatly assisted by the infrequency of staff changes. Absenteeism is low, there is no abuse of the sick-pay scheme and disputes involving the men's union are almost unknown.

Unfortunately, two accidents occurred to men whilst at work during the year, though both men resumed work at a later date. Protective clothing is issued to each workman on the following scale :—

Two boiler suits each year.  
One  $\frac{3}{4}$ -length waterproof jacket.  
One pair of waterproof leggings  
Rubber boots as required.

Instructions have been issued to all refuse collectors on the best way in which to lift, carry and empty dustbins. Improved washing facilities have been provided at the depot.

### **Transport and Haulage**

Delivery was taken near the end of the year of a new Shelvoke and Drewry 16/18 cu. yd. capacity diesel engined fore-and-aft tipper to cope with the ever increasing volume of refuse, and a new salvage trailer, with heavy type coupling was placed on order from a local firm. Together with a new cesspool-emptier which is on order, these vehicles should replace the tiller-type vehicles which are both over 20 years old.

The use of diesel engines has affected economy but for best performance it has been found necessary to fit radiator blinds.

Extra garage accommodation has been provided at the depot for garaging vehicles and this has been carried out by the department's own labour. Electricity was first made available to the depot in 1959.

The vehicle fleet, now numbering 10, were involved in three minor accidents in the year. No appreciable damage was caused to the Council's vehicles. The total cost of vehicles and haulage in the year was as follows :—

Road Fund Licences and Insurance	£ 603
Petrol and Diesel	£1675
Repairs, Spares, Tyres, etc.	£2207
Loan Charges	£1658
	<hr/>
	£6143
	<hr/>

### Refuse Collection

A weekly kerbside refuse and salvage collection is provided in the “urban” areas in which about half of the population of the district resides. A fortnightly kerbside collection is given throughout the “rural” areas, except in Wingland where there is a monthly collection but refuse is now becoming so heavy that a weekly service to most areas is planned. In spite of the scattered development in some parts, very few properties in the district are not provided with a collection service. In the year extensions were made to routes to cover Coronation Avenue, Gedney Hill, Bells Drove and Masterdyke at Sutton St. James, Little Marsh Lane at Fleet, Sunderland Farm at Lutton and Bush Meadow Lane at Whaplode.

It is estimated that refuse is collected from approximately 6,000 premises and four vehicles (including the stand-by) are used for this work working both on the round and the relay systems. Except on public holidays, regular collections have been maintained through every week of the year.

### Refuse Disposal

Disposal of refuse is by controlled tipping, usually in water-filled pits near the roadside. The filling in of these pits improves the amenities of the area as it prevents indiscriminate tipping into them and often the filled-in area is soon cultivated, but it deprives the fire service of emergency water supplies for fire fighting and it may deprive wildfowl of nesting place inland.

Apart from a main tip at Tydd, use has been made in the year of a number of small tips at Fishpond Lane Holbeach, Gedney Drove End, Gedney Fen, Millgate Whaplode and two at Long Sutton.

Owing to the very light and bulky nature of the refuse and the smallness of its cinder and ash content, proper consolidation is very necessary and sleepers are required to make temporary roadways for the refuse vehicles.

## Salvage

Salvage, principally paper and cardboard, is collected in trailers and on vehicle roof racks at the same time as the refuse collection and special collections are made from business premises in the urban areas. A new Crawford 5.H.P. electric paper baling press was purchased in the year and this effects great economy in manpower compared with the old-fashioned hand-baler which is still useful for baling rags.

The amount of paper collected in 1959 shows a 12% increase over 1958 figures and is 250% more than in 1949. Collections could be further increased if only the public would put less in their dustbins. This is a waste of potential revenue and does increase the work on refuse tips.

A steady revenue from textiles continues but the market for ferrous scrap was non-existent in the year.

The total value of salvage sold since the present scheme began in 1940 is now £28,920. Details of sales during 1959 are as follows :—

Material				Tons	Cwts.	Qrs.	£	s.	d.
Paper and Cardboard	....	....	....	315	14	2	2131	3	6
Textiles	....	....	....	3	17	3	64	18	—
Ferrous Metals	....	....	....	—	—	—	1	—	—
Non-ferrous Metals	....	....	....		7	3	26	13	10
Sundries	....	....	....	—	—	—	2	2	8
Cartons	....	....	....	—	—	—	39	11	10
Totals				320	—	—	£2265	9	10

## Cesspool and Vault Emptying

A cesspool-emptying service is given to all parts of the district. Except where the contents are trade refuse, e.g. at slaughterhouses, etc., free emptying is given on request at each property provided twelve months has elapsed since the last emptying. A charge is made if the service is required at shorter intervals. As far as possible the work is organised on a rota basis according to the date of request for service although some priority is given to schools, food premises, etc. and work is avoided near shopping centres on market days or other busy times. Four suction-type emptiers are in use on this work.

For the first year since the inauguration of the cesspool-emptying service, there has been a slight drop in the number of cesspools emptied as compared with the previous year. This was due to the exceptionally dry weather in the year under review and it is not thought that demand for the service has yet reached its peak, and no great reduction in the work can be envisaged for many years even taking into consideration the proposed main sewerage. The following table shows how the

number of cesspools emptied has increased since 1946 and has almost doubled within the past seven years :—

Year	1946	1949	1952	1955	1958	1959
Cesspools emptied :	.... 1082	2164	3067	4670	6138	5928

With the common practice of providing cesspools well at the rear of houses, which are themselves often set back off the road, much time is taken in laying out the suction hose pipes. Advantage has been taken of private drives to reduce this distance from vehicle to cesspool and to avoid obstruction by standing the vehicle on the public road. It is unfortunate therefore that in a few instances the vehicle has caused damage to the private drive and as this damage is not covered by insurance, instructions have had to be given not to make use of these drives unless absolutely necessary.

2250 vault closets were emptied in the year, without charge to the occupiers, mostly by means of cesspool-emptying vehicles, but in some cases the contents had to be dug out and removed by a side loading vehicle with leak-proof rear doors.

The enormous quantity of cesspool and vault closet contents (over 3 million gallons annually) which have to be disposed of presents a considerable problem. Unfortunately, when collections are heaviest—in winter and prolonged wet periods—disposal is most difficult. Discharge is made into irrigation trenches at two Council owned sites and at one refuse tip, and a certain amount disposed of by the use of straw composting tanks. When conditions permit, however, large quantities are spread over agricultural land at the request of farmers. This latter means of disposal has caused concern to me when using grazing land due to the possibility of encouraging the life cycle of *Cysticercus bovis* but in spite of a considerable number of investigations which have been made in this district after instances of this parasite have been found or reported not one case has suggested this practice to be the cause of infection.

**Sanitary Pail Collection and Disposal**

On five evenings each week collection is made from about 800 dwellings in certain parts of Holbeach, Long Sutton and Sutton Bridge. Requests to extend this service have not been encouraged as it inevitably causes nuisance in the streets. The work is carried out using specially made 4-gallon nightsoil carrying pails which are emptied into a small receiving hopper fitted at the rear of a cesspool-emptying vehicle.

Disposal is by composting in well drained ground-level tanks. The product is similar to farmyard manure and several local farmers make use of it.

## Summary of Cleansing Costs

It is hoped that in future years details of costs for each service with vehicle costs and unit costs can be prepared in the department but it depends upon staff being available from other duties to compile these figures. The following is a summary of the costs of the cleansing services as a whole for the financial year 1959/60 prepared by the Chief Financial Officer.

Wages and Insurance	£10,269
Vehicles and Haulage	£ 6,143
Depot	£ 457
Clothing	£ 88
Miscellaneous	£ 163
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Gross Expenditure	£17,120
Revenue	£ 4,086
	<hr/>
Nett Cost	£13,034
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## HOUSING

### Provision of New Houses

I feel that the Council and the Holland County Council can be justifiably proud of their combined effort to deal with the problem of housing old persons by their adoption of the "Dorset" scheme adjoining the County Council home for the aged at Stukeley Hall, Holbeach. With the completion of this scheme and the demolition of the Plantation Site Hutments at Sutton Bridge the number of Council owned houses at 1st June 1960 is as follows :—

(a) Permanent houses :	Erected prior to 1945	869
	Completed since 1945	815
	Under erection	46
(b) Temporary bungalows :	Aluminium type at Holbeach and Sutton Bridge	69
	Converted ex-R.A.F. Hutments at Sutton Bridge	25

The number of new dwellings completed during 1959 were as follows :—

- (a) By the Council : 19 houses, 18 bungalows. Total 37
- (b) By private enterprise : 9 houses, 32 bungalows, 1 Flat. Total 42

## **Applications for Council Houses**

The Council operate a “ points ” scheme for the selection of tenants for Council houses. It is based on a number of factors such as condition of house, size and age and health of family, service in H.M. Forces, date of original application and residential qualifications. All applications are considered on a parish basis by the Councillors for the particular parish.

The Health Department occasionally, and generally only on a Councillor's request, makes a report on the housing conditions of applicants. These reports are then attached to the housing application forms. Twelve such reports were made in the year apart from representations by the Medical Officer of Health on personal health grounds.

At the present time there are approximately 560 applications on the list.

## **Overcrowding**

There was only one serious case of overcrowding reported on in the year. Unfortunately, abatement was not possible as no four-bedroomed Council houses are provided in the district. The conditions of another overcrowded family were eased by re-housing, and a further case of a problem family is being kept under review.

The hostel provided by the local canning factory was inspected regularly. Sanitary facilities are satisfactory and the hostel well kept. The conversion of a large house into a hostel by the same firm was carried out incorporating all the department's recommendations.

There are no common lodging houses, houses let-in-lodgings or canal boats in the district.

## **Slum Clearance**

Houses demolished during the year :—

- (a) As a result of Clearance Orders :— 6 (no displacements in the year).
- (b) As a result of individual Orders :— 21 (14 persons in 5 families were displaced).

Houses closed during the year :—

- (a) As a result of closing order or official undertakings :— 13 (35 persons in 10 families were displaced).
- (b) By informal agreement with owners :— 3 (no displacements).

In the year the worst of the unfit houses at Long Sutton were dealt with—four clearance orders were made in respect of 16 houses and individual action was taken in regard to 10 further houses. Individual unfit houses in other parishes were also dealt with, and in

particular, progress has been made at Holbeach Bank. It is hoped that, with the proposals for the erection of further council houses, the increased activity in slum clearance work will continue and a planned programme be pursued each year. In this way it should be possible to proximate to the Council's original slum clearance proposals and a more accurate assessment of the future life of the sub-standard dwellings in the area will be determinable. Thus proper advice can be given to intending purchasers of old property and there will be better guidance when requiring owners to effect repairs and when recommending improvement grants for older properties.

The increased number of properties becoming owner-occupied is a welcomed trend except in the cases where tenants have bought properties which are already worn out and incapable of being brought up to a proper standard. As a general public health measure there must be a minimum standard of housing for everyone, even an owner-occupier.

Experience suggests that undertakings not to re-let in lieu of demolition or closing orders seldom prove satisfactory. The property concerned can soon become derelict or may be sold when new proposals for its use have to be considered. As a rule, the properties dealt with are not suitable for conversion to other uses and their continued life involves the department in protracted negotiations which could well be avoided.

The generality of the eight-point standard of fitness laid down in Section 4 of the Housing Act 1957 causes some doubts when one has to give advice or an estimate of the cost of the works necessary to make the dwelling "reasonably" fit, and de-control of rent can make one rather uncertain over one's estimate of the value of the property.

### **Disrepair of private dwellings**

During 1959, a total of 60 houses were repaired by owners after informal action. In several of these cases the repairs carried out were only a minimum to ensure weathertightness until demolition procedure is invoked, but in other cases general overhaul and improvement have been effected, and usually, though not always, this is followed by a permitted increase in rent.

In the older dwellings in the district, a long life has been obtained from the properties because of good, hard-burnt brick and substantial pantile roofs but this life is often limited by the pitifully inadequate foundations provided and the fact that when the roof does deteriorate it presents difficulty in repairing it without complete reconstruction.

Unfortunately quite a proportion of old houses lack deep sinks, internal water points and adequate drainage. Where the property has still a reasonable life, it is felt that owners must be pressed to have these necessary facilities installed for the comfort of their tenants and as an environmental health measure.

### Certificates of disrepair.

Extent of work carried out under the Rent Act 1957 in the year under review is shown by the following table. Many of the applicants for certificates of disrepair, however, do not seem to realise that most of the Council's functions under this Act are those of mediators between landlord and tenant in cases of dispute, and the Council does not have authority to enforce repair work.

Number of applications received for Certificates of Disrepair	11
„ „ decisions not to issue such Certificates ....	nil
„ „ decisions to issue Certificates	
(a) in respect of some but not all defects ....	2
(b) in respect of all defects ....	7
„ „ undertakings given by landlords ....	5
„ „ such undertakings refused ....	nil
„ „ certificates issued ....	4
„ „ applications for cancellation of Certificate ....	nil
„ „ objections by tenants to cancellation ....	nil
„ „ certificates cancelled by local authority ....	nil

### Improvement Grants.

The inauguration of the Standard Improvement Grant under the House Purchase and Housing Act, 1959, brought forward immediate response from interested persons. The simplified procedure and relaxed conditions of grant seem to have wide appeal and not only to owner-occupiers. One farm estate has, with the aid of standard grants, embarked on a programme of improving all its tied cottages by installing modern amenities. In this way it is hoped that decay in a whole village will be avoided—the property will be given new life and the drift away of the agricultural workers will be arrested.

Due to the introduction of Standard Grants, the Council decided to increase discretionary grant-aid from 25% to 50% of the cost of approved improvements. On request a preliminary joint inspection of each property is made by the Council's Architect and myself to give interested owners information and advice about improvement grants before plans and specifications are drawn up. The following table gives details of grant-aided improvements and conversions in 1959.

	Discretionary Grants			Standard Grants
	25% grant	50% grant	Total	
No. of applications received	8	6	14	38
No. of applications approved	7	6	13	38
No. of properties improved in year			7	6

## **Moveable Dwellings.**

Inspections have been made throughout the year to ensure as far as practicable reasonable conditions for caravan dwellers in the area. There exists no serious problem with licensed vans and sites here, although one owner was required to carry out roof repairs and another to make alternative arrangements for water supply. There is a regular influx of itinerants for fruit picking and later each year for potato picking. Most of these people make suitable arrangements with the employing farmers, but an odd van or two will be found parked on a green road, provided with only the most primitive of living conditions and will move only after some coercion, leaving behind the unwanted refuse produced by living and scrap dealing.

There are 4 licensed sites in the area and during the year, 44 licences were issued in respect of individual moveable dwellings.

## **INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD**

### **Hygiene of Food Premises.**

The number of visits made by the public health inspectorate to food premises in 1959 were all too few. Unfortunately, in times of pressure of work in the department it is this branch of our work which is reduced first. Although the standard of food handling in the area is not low, there is scope for educational work and encouragement to ensure that all food handlers, particularly new entrants to the trade, are hygiene conscious.

There is a tendency in a country district for shops to become congested through the carrying of too much and too varied a stock and often there is undesirable mixing of foodstuffs with other commodities ; this may result in stocks not being used up in strict rotation. When revisiting food premises, it is very disappointing to find that the new washing facilities, sometimes installed after considerable argument, are not being used as they should be. The condition of the cloth towel in use often calls for adverse comment : perhaps the increasing popularity of paper towels will be a solution to this. It is fortunate that there are sufficient established static food traders in the district to prevent an increase in the number of mobile shops. Whilst these vehicles may provide a convenient service for householders, perishable foods cannot be stored or handled as hygienically as in a properly built food premise, and the provision of washing facilities on the vehicle is not a guarantee of their proper maintenance and use.

During the year, 23 informal notices were sent to occupiers of food businesses in connection with the Food Hygiene Regulations. No action was taken over the seasonal sale of strawberries from stalls along the roadside. The table below gives a list of food premises in the district.

Bakery and confectionery premises	....	....	15
Butchery premises	....	....	26
Canning and bottling premises	....	....	2
Canteens at schools, works and hospitals		....	24
Catering premises proper	....	....	30
Dairy and ice-cream manufacturing premises		....	2
Fried fish and chip saloons	....	....	16
Fruit and Greengrocery premises		....	9
Grocery and provisions premises		....	70
Licensed houses and clubs	....	....	98
Small general stores	....	....	14
Sweet confectionery shops	....	....	21
			<hr/> 327 <hr/>

During the year 136 inspections were made of the 107 premises registered by the Council under Section 16 of the Food & Drug Act 1955. Twenty-two of these premises are registered for the manufacture of sausages and preserved meats.

### Control of Milk Supplies.

The rural district is included in a specified area where only designated milk may normally be sold by retail. One dairy is registered by the Council for the bottling of Tuberculin Tested milk and there are twelve distributors registered by the Council. Licences authorising the use of special designations have been granted as follows :—

Designation	Dealer's licences	Supplementary licences
Pasteurised	11	5
Sterilised	9	4
Tuberculin Tested	5	5
Tuberculin Tested (Pasteurised)	9	1

During the year, 46 samples of various grades of milk were taken to the public health laboratory at Peterborough for the statutory tests. All except 3 conformed to the required standard. One which failed the test was a sample of raw tuberculin tested milk produced outside the area. The Ministry Milk Production Officer was informed and further samples taken ; these proved satisfactory.

The other two failures led to a milk producer-retailer being fined £100 plus £15 costs at Long Sutton Magistrates Court. The prosecution was instituted by Mr. R. Fidling, County Health Inspector, and its success was due to excellent co-operation and combined efforts of this Council's inspectors with Mr. Fidling. The defendant was fined £25 on each of the following four charges :—

- (a) Section 37(5) of the Food and Drugs Act 1955 as applied by the Milk (Special Designations) (Special Areas) (No. 2) Order 1956, i.e. selling milk without the use of a special designation.
- (b) Section 2 (2) of the Merchandise Marks Act 1887, as amended by the Merchandise Marks Act, 1953, i.e. selling goods to which a false trade description was applied.
- (c) Section 2 (2) of the Merchandise Marks Act, 1887, as amended by the Merchandise Marks Act, 1953, i.e. having in possession for sale goods to which a false trade description was applied.
- (d) Section 32 (3) Food and Drugs Act 1955, i.e. having in possession for sale for human consumption milk to which an addition, namely water had been made.

The defendant was a producer of undesignated milk. He was also a milk retailer, but as his milk rounds were in a specified area, he necessarily had to purchase bottled designated milk for his retail sales. Information received suggested that some of the milk retailed by this vendor was not designated milk. Repeated checks on the milk being carried on his three motor vehicles did not disclose any offence. Inspection of stocks of milk stored at his dairy showed no contravention. It was discovered, however, that times of delivery of milk on the rounds varied considerably from time to time. Eventually two bottles of milk were found on the back doorstep of a house in a very secluded place, the caps on these bottles did not have the same design as the bottles of milk supplied by a milk pasteurising firm to the vendor for his retail sales. The bottles however, were of the type issued by the pasteurising firm and had their name embossed on the bottles.

A visit to the vendor's dairy at 5 a.m. did not show any contravention with regard to stocks of bottled milk waiting to be loaded on the vehicles for retail delivery. A search was then made of other buildings on the same premises, and in a small shed containing old tyres, boxes, cattle cake, etc. five crates of milk bearing the suspect type of cap on the bottles were found. When challenged with the findings, the vendor admitted that he had been bottling, capping and retailing some of his own undesignated milk production. For this purpose he had used bottles which belonged to the firm from which he obtained his pasteurised supplies.

As the name of the pasteurising firm was well known locally and their name appeared on the bottles used by the vendor, the purchasing housewives were under the impression they were in fact getting pasteurised milk. The vendor stated his reason for contravention was to save money on the various charges made by the firm from whom he obtained his bottled milk supplies. Laboratory tests showed the milk had not been pasteurised and a bottle submitted for analysis showed 9½% of added water.

### Ice Cream Control.

There is one “ cold-mix ” manufacturer in the district and 84 premises in use which are registered for the sale and storage of ice-cream. In the year 30 samples were collected and were placed in the Provisional Grades of the methylene blue test as follows :—

	Grade I	Grade II	Grade III	Grade IV	Not tested
Ice Cream samples	23	1	2	—	1
Ice Cream lollies	3	—	—	—	—

No explanation could be found for the two Grade III samples, but follow-up samples all proved satisfactory.

The County Health Inspector took samples for compositional quality and checked on correct labelling and designation of the product.

### Slaughterhouses.

Early in the year a summary of the structural requirements of the new Slaughterhouse Regulations as they affect the eight licensed slaughterhouses in the district was prepared in the department and sent to each occupier together with a suggested list of works required to meet the new standard on the basis of the existing kill. A summary of requirements regarding management and conduct in slaughterhouses was also sent out and particular point was made of the necessity for insect control. The district inspectors gave all possible assistance to the slaughterhouse occupiers regarding the interpretation and scope of the new Regulations and, in November, all interested parties were invited to give their views prior to the compilation of the Slaughterhouse Report for the district.

The new Regulations are welcomed as a much-needed and quite effective control over private slaughterhouses ; they are most comprehensive although no conditions are laid down in regard to access roads and paved surrounds to slaughterhouses. The administrative provisions and the revised licensing arrangements however, are very complicated and seem unnecessarily difficult, yet there has been no revision of the 1924 Meat Regulations which provide for only inadequate periods of detention of meat in slaughterhouses.

**Slaughtermen.**

During the year 32 licences were issued to slaughtermen under the Slaughter of Animals Acts. None of these restricted the licence holder to kill animals only under supervision.

**Meat Inspection.**

Again, there has been 100% inspection of all locally killed food animals. Although the service is expensive to the Council in travelling expenses and a certain amount of overtime, its importance can be judged by the fact that there were 79 emergency slaughtered animals presented for inspection during the year under review, and a total of 53 entire carcasses were rejected as unfit for human consumption, as well as eight which were sent for cold-storage treatment. The reduction in tuberculosis and the generally improved animal health which has been achieved has had a noticeable effect in easing, to some extent the routine work of the meat inspector but there are still plenty of carcasses which call for careful judgement by experienced inspectors.

For the first year since de-control, there is a reduction in the incidence of cysticercus bovis in animals slaughtered in this district. The percentage of adult cattle found to be affected has dropped from 1.65% in 1956, 1.9% in 1957, 2.2% in 1958 to 1.4% in 1959. Five investigations were made following cognizance that beasts from local farms were affected with this parasite. Two affected beast were found to have been reared on a joint holding used by 6 tenant farmers where no closet accommodation was provided on the farm at all. The immediate landlords and later, the agents for the owners were asked to provide this but it had not been done by the end of the year. The crew yard is undoubtedly a likely place for the parasite to change hosts and it is felt that the provision of adequate farm closets could be of help in combating the disease. The cold-store at Long Sutton which has been used for cold storage of carcasses affected with cysticercosis was frequently inspected to ensure that carcasses were kept at sufficiently low temperature for the required period to kill the parasite.

The amount of meat condemned at slaughterhouses in the district has been as follows. All such meat is green-stained before despatch for sterilisation.

Year	Affected with tuberculosis		Affected with other disease		Total weight	
1955	4 tons	6 cwts.	4 tons	8 cwts.	8 tons	14 cwts.
1956	2 tons	18 cwts.	4 tons	14 cwts.	7 tons	12 cwts.
1957	2 tons	13 cwts.	8 tons	5 cwts.	10 tons	18 cwts.
1958	2 tons	5 cwts.	8 tons	9 cwts.	10 tons	14 cwts.
1959	2 tons	2 cwts.	7 tons	6 cwts.	9 tons	8 cwts.

Meat inspection figures for 1959 are given in the table below :—

Class of animal	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep & Lambs	Pigs
Number killed	1110	24	7	1457	4268
Number inspected	1110	24	7	1457	4268
<b>All diseases except Tuberculosis</b>					
Whole carcasses condemned	4	2	2	14	29
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	353	5	2	31	408
Percentage of carcass affected with disease other than Tuberculosis	32.2	29.2	57.1	3.1	10.2
<b>Tuberculosis only</b>					
Whole carcasses condemned	2	—	—	—	—
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	53	4	—	—	44
Percentage of carcasses affect- ed with Tuberculosis	5.0	16.7	—	—	1.0
<b>Cysticercosis</b>					
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	16	—	—	—	—
Carcasses submitted to treat- ment by refrigeration	8	—	—	—	—
Generalised and totally condemned	—	—	—	—	—

### Inspection of Other Foods.

The Holland County Council are the local Food and Drugs authority and regular sampling of a great miscellany of foods was carried out in the year by the County Public Health Inspector who also checked on the colouring matters used at the canning factory. This checking was not found to be a simple matter. Samples of the colouring matters and of the final packs were taken by him as well as occasional samples taken by this department as a check on the efficiency of canning process.

Weekly inspections have been made at the factory of imported fruit found to be unsuitable for further processing and condemnation notes were issued in respect of products listed in the table below. The food was disposed of by tipping in a pit in an isolated part of the district.

	5 Kilo Cans	3½ kilo Cans	3 kilo Cans	A.10 size Cans
Peaches	469	553	573	—
Peach Pulp	16	—	—	—
Apricots	3058	—	34	—
Apricot Pulp	115	—	—	—
Pears	230	—	—	—
Cherries	186	—	—	—
Pineapple	—	—	553	716
	<hr/> 4074	<hr/> 553	<hr/> 1160	<hr/> 716

Request was received during warm weather in August to give an opinion on a consignment of plums of doubtful quality which had been delivered to the factory. Decay had begun to the fruit in each case opened and consequently the whole lorry load was rejected as unfit.

A complaint of the sale of two mouldy pork pies was investigated, the matter was taken up with the manufacturers who agreed to improve their cooling of the pies and to adopt recommendations to prevent any further recurrence.

After the breakdown of refrigeration plant, a certificate was given for 272½ lbs. Beef and 19 lbs. Pork in which decomposition had become pronounced. A total of 82 cans, bottles and jars of various foodstuffs and 49 lbs. Cooked Shoulder ham were voluntarily surrendered in the year and carefully buried in the Council's controlled tips. Other food dealt with included 11 brace of pheasant and 24 chickens.

## DISINFESTATION

### Rodent Control

The Council employs a trained rodent operator who, to make a full working week, also carries out insect control, disinfection and other work for the department. Warfarin has been generally used as it is an easy and relatively humane method of exterminating rodents but advantage has been taken of the speedy use of cyanide gassing occasionally in suitable situations.

It was necessary to circulate a letter to the occupiers of houses near to a pit which, inspite of several treatments, quickly became re-infested ; the practice of throwing domestic refuse into the pit was continuing inspite of verbal warnings and a weekly refuse collection service. Nine informal notices were sent requiring proofing of properties against rodents and two informal notices were sent to farmers in respect of infested agricultural land. One threshing machine operator was cautioned for carrying on work, without putting a wire fence around the stacks.

An interesting point concerning the habits of rats is the way in which they differentiate between flower bulbs—they are frequently observed taking tulip bulbs for food, but never touch daffodil bulbs, which are poisonous.

Owing to the simplicity in the use of Warfarin, many farmers in the district prefer to engage their own labour on rat destruction work rather than employ the Council operator. The result is often a haphazard and unsuccessful treatment, so more surveys by the Council's operator are now found to be necessary to ensure that adequate control is being achieved at farms. Some survey work is carried out by the public health inspectors in the course of their duties. The following table shows the total work carried out in the nine months, 1st April to 31st December, 1959.

	TYPE OF PROPERTY				
	1	2	3	4	5
	Local Authority	Dwelling Houses	Business Premises	Total of 1, 2 & 3	Agricultural
Total Number of Properties in District ...	56	7080	1125	8261	1700
Number of Properties inspected during 1959 as a result of (a) Not- fication (b) Survey or (c) otherwise	(a) 1 (b) 15 (c) 12	30 69 71	10 31 84	41 115 167	14 51 72
Total Inspections	133	243	192	568	365
Number of Properties inspected found to be infested with (a) Rats { Major Minor (b) Mice { Major Minor	1 8 — —	— 32 — —	— 10 — 4	1 50 — 4	5 43 — 1
Number of infested Properties treated by Local Authority	9	32	13	54	41
Total treatments carried out	17	20	16	53	41
No. of notices served under Section 4 of the Act (a) Treatment (b) Structural Work	— —	— —	— 9	— 9	2 —
Legal Proceedings	—	—	—	—	—
Block Control Schemes	3				

### **Insect Control**

There was a large population of wasps in this area in 1959 and the department destroyed 55 wasps nests where these were near houses and causing a nuisance to householders. The work was done free of charge as a public health measure. Every effort was made to keep down fly infestations at refuse tips and help was given to houses nearby. For the first time for many years crickets invaded one tip. Spraying of the tips was effected by adapting a cesspool-emptier for this work.

One dwelling house was treated to destroy fleas, three houses to destroy ants and three vault closets were treated against larvae of the lesser house fly. Two houses were found badly infested with cockroaches and it is believed that the persistent control measures have been successful without having to resort to the removal of fire-places.

### **FACTORIES AND WORKPLACES**

#### **Factories Act 1937 and 1948**

	No. on Register	No. of Inspections	Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
Factories without Power	6	2	—	—
Factories with Power	106	35	4	—
Works of building operations	5	5	—	—

No. of cases in which defects were found :—

	Found	Remedied	Referred to H.M. Inspector	Referred by H.M. Inspector
Want of cleanliness	—	—	—	—
Overcrowding	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation	—	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors	—	—	—	—
Sanitary Conveniences				
(a) Insufficient	2	2	—	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective	3	2	—	2
(c) Not separate for sexes	—	—	—	—
Other offences	—	—	—	—

5 outworkers are employed in making hair pins.

## **Workplaces**

There seems no adequate reason why section 46 of the Public Health Act 1936, which gives some measure of control over conditions in offices, etc., should not be enforceable by all rural district Councils. It is hoped that the proposed Offices Bill, if it becomes law, will have no such restriction on its enforcement.

Sanitary accommodation for office workers at two premises was investigated in the year, and improvements were made, but in one case where the W.C. compartment opens directly into the office, attempts to get an intervening ventilated space provided were not successful.

## **Means of Escape in Case of Fire**

After joint inspection and consultation with officers of the County Fire Brigade, a certificate was issued in the year in regard to means of escape in case of fire at a local factory. Certificates are now in force in respect of 8 factories in the district. In addition, a garage was inspected where petrol is stored near the entrance to the workroom. A new emergency exit was provided and other matters to reduce fire risk have been put in hand.

Certificates have also been issued in respect of the conditions of entrances, exits and sanitary conveniences at the three cinemas in the district.

## **STORAGE OF PETROLEUM**

The public health inspectors are also appointed officers under the Petroleum Regulation Acts 1928-1936 and a considerable task completed in the year was the reviewing of petrol storage installations in view of the newly adopted code of construction and the electrical requirements for petrol pumps coming into force in 1960.

Major alterations were required at a number of licensed premises, and at two garages where petrol is stored under the workshop floor, the owners agreed to provide an air-bubbler type of tank contents gauge and off-set fill pipes so that the tanks would be sealed off from the workroom. All the petrol stations which were not regarded as satisfactory have, at the time of going to press, been improved with one exception. In this case, plans have been submitted to rebuild.

With regard to electrical conditions governing petrol pumps, at first reliance was placed on the model and serial number of the pump, but it became apparent that individual inspection of each pump was the only way to be sure it was properly flame-proofed.

In addition to checking constructional and electrical work and witnessing flow tests, air pressure tests and seepage tests on new installations, **10** tanks in all, one air test was witnessed on an existing tank. Seepage tests were carried out on **15** existing tanks which were over 20 years old. 4 showed leakage and the tanks were renewed. At one newly built garage, three 1,000 gallon tanks were found to have been put in without the necessary brick or concrete vault and they were subsequently lifted out and replaced, under supervision, adequately encased in concrete.

There are 198 petrol stores and one carbide of calcium store in the district. Revenue from licence fees amounted to **£121** in the year ending March 1960. 256 visits were made to these premises and 57 informal notices were sent requiring works to be done to comply with licensing conditions.



